

Jesus, the Heart of Scripture:
The Voice of God
 Genesis 1:1-3a

Genesis means “in the beginning.” Moses wrote the Pentateuch/Torah, the first five books of the Bible as Israel traveled through the wilderness toward the Promised Land. For 400 years Israel had been taught of Egypt’s god and their creation account. In Genesis, Moses redefines God for them and retells the history of Israel and how they came into Egypt.

First: Jesus is the Creating Voice

Of course, the existence of the Trinity – God expressed in three distinct persons of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is impossible to fathom. But we know that when the Bible says, “*And God said...*” Jesus is speaking. We gain this, not simply from Gen 1 but from other NT texts

John 1:1-4a - *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life...*

1 Corinthians 8:6 - *...there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.*

Colossians 1:15-17 - *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created... ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.*

Hebrews 1:1-3 - *Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. ³ He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power*

- The Father is the Author
- The Son is the agent
- The Holy Spirit is the power

What does this mean?

a) It is no wonder that creation obeys Jesus – **Chris's video**

Mk 4:35-41 – But Jesus calmed the storm

b) It is no wonder that demons obey Jesus.

Mark 5:7b - *"What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me."* ⁸ For he was saying to him, *"Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!"*

c) It is no wonder that time and space obey Jesus

John 4:46-53 - *So he came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine. And at Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill. ⁴⁷ When this man heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went to him and asked him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. ⁴⁸ So Jesus said to him, "Unless you^[c] see signs and wonders you will not believe." ⁴⁹ The official said to him, "Sir, come down before my child dies." ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, "Go; your son will live." The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and went on his way. ⁵¹ As he was going down, his servants met him and told him that his son was recovering. ⁵² So he asked them the hour when he began to get better, and they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him." ⁵³ The father knew that was the hour when Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live."*

d) It is no wonder that death obeys Jesus.

Luke 7:14-16 - *Then he came up and touched the bier, and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." ¹⁵ And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother. ¹⁶ Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people!"*

It made sense before, but it makes better sense now. When Jesus arrived on the scene, everything – nature, physical bodies, time, space, even death, obeyed him because he created everything.

All creation bows before the Creator who made it. It is no wonder that his return and reign will return everything to its created order.

1 Corinthians 15:25-26 - *For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶ The last enemy to be destroyed is death*

Second: Jesus is the Speaking Voice

Genesis 1:1-3 – And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

Every time God 'said' in Genesis, it is Jesus who is speaking.

Jesus is the voice of God. This means that when

Genesis 3:8 - And they [Adam and Eve] heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"

Since the Father is invisible and doesn't have a physical existence (John 4:24), it is Jesus who is walking in the garden and fellowshiping with Adam and Eve.

This only makes sense.

Luke 19:10 - For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.

Even in the Garden, Jesus was seeking the lost.

Third: Jesus is the Written Voice

Multiple times throughout the Bible, we read this phrase, *"The Word of the Lord came to me..."* Who is that speaking?

Jeremiah 1:4-5 – Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ⁵ "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

Zechariah 4:8 - Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ⁹ "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also complete it."

It is through Jesus, by Jesus, that God speaks... Jesus is God's voice and word in the OT.

1 Kings 19:9 - There he came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

Who spoke to Elijah? Jesus is the voice of God, the word of God.

Hebrews 1:1-2a - *Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son,*

Jesus was God's voice to the OT prophets.

1 Peter 1:10-12 - *Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully, ¹¹ inquiring what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when he predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. ¹² It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.*

When you read the OT, you are reading the words of Jesus. You are reading the story of Jesus.

You are watching God work out a redemptive plan that began before the world existed.

When you read the OT, you are reading the life of Jesus expressed in creation, in Israel, in the world. You are watching Jesus come into the world.

And then when you come to the NT, Jesus is God's voice in the NT.

Luke 9:35 – [On the Mount of Transfiguration] – *“This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!”*

Fourth: Jesus is God's Voice to Us

This is how we apply all of this –

John 5:39 - *You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me,*

Luke 24:27 [on the road to Emmaus] - *And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.*

We are no more than three words into the third verse of Genesis when Jesus appears for the first time in the OT.

We have too great a tendency to separate God's voice in the OT and the NT, as though one is angry, and one is nice. But it is the same God in both the OT and NT.

When we hear Jesus speaking in the NT, it is the OT God who is talking to us. The God who created everything. The God who met Moses at the burning bush. The God who told Moses to cross the Red Sea and promised deliverance. The God who thundered from Sinai. The God who warned Israel about disobedience in the Promised Land and then sent them into 70 years of captivity with a promise of return.

- Moses and Sinai

Exodus 20:18-19 [at the giving of the Ten Commandments] - *Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off¹⁹ and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die."*

- Elijah and the Cave –

1 Kings 19:11-13 – *And he said, "Go out and stand on the mount before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake.¹² And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper.¹³ And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"*

Then, in the Transfiguration, both Moses and Elijah appear with Jesus. They are authenticating the voice of God. (It's kind of like a baton passing from OT to NT saints). They are saying, in effect, *"This is the same God who spoke with us."*

John 14:1b - *Believe in God; believe also in me.*

Matthew 17:5 - *"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."*

Fifth: Jesus is God's Word to Us

This year we will look at Jesus in Genesis and Exodus. That means that the Christmas sermon this year (DV) will end with Exodus and is entitled *"One Greater Than Moses,"*

taking us from Sinai in the Sinai Peninsula of Egypt to the Mount of Beatitudes in Israel. There, we will hear Jesus deliver the new decalogue –

Matthew 5:3-11 - *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

⁴ *"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*

⁵ *"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.*

⁶ *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.*

⁷ *"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.*

⁸ *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*

⁹ *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.*

¹⁰ *"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

¹¹ *"Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

When we see Jesus on the Mount of Beatitudes as the voice of God who thundered on Sinai, it changes the Sermon on the Mount from a *'please and thank you,'* or *'this might be nice'* to a *'Do this and live. Don't do this and die.'*

So, let me ask you. Since Jesus is the voice of God, and the Beatitudes are God's word to us, intended for our good, how are you doing with them? Let's ask ourselves this on the first and last Sundays of 2023.

If you're looking for Scripture to memorize in 2023, this would be a good start.

Conclusion:

The Word, Jesus, first took flesh in a voice. The OT saints didn't always see the physical body of Jesus but heard God's word in Jesus, who spoke on God's behalf in the OT. In the same way, we don't see the physical body of Jesus, but God speaks to us in Jesus by his Word.

It is true, as Hebrews reminds us, that we have not come to Sinai but Zion (Hb 12:18-24), but it is the God of Sinai and Zion who speaks to us in the NT, and his words should carry the same weight.

Community Groups:

- 1 - Read Genesis 1:1-3, John 1:1-4.
- 2 - According to these verses, what member of the Trinity created everything?
- 3 - Read Colossians 1:15-17 & Hebrews 1:3. What else does Jesus do regarding creation?
- 4 - Why do creation and death obey Jesus?
- 5 - Read Genesis 3:8. Since God is a Spirit, who is walking and talking with Adam and Eve in Eden?
- 6 - How does this help us explain Luke 19:10?
- 7 - Read 1 Peter 1:10-12. Who were the OT prophets looking for in the OT?
- 8 - Read Luke 9:35. What does the Father say about the Son's voice?
- 9 - Read Luke 24:27 - Does Jesus say that he was in the Pentateuch?
- 10 - What does this say about Jesus's voice to us in the NT? Is it equally as credible as "God's voice" in the OT?
- 11 - Read Matthew 17:1-8. Why is it important that Moses and Elijah, with whom Jesus spoke in the OT, be present with the disciples and Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration?
- 11 - What weight should Jesus's NT voice carry?
- 12 - How does seeing Jesus as God's OT voice, help me respond to Jesus's voice in the NT?

Daily Devotion

Monday, January 2nd. Read Genesis 1:1-3a and John 1:1-4. Jesus is God's creating voice and is the Creator of everything that exists. How might this alter the way you interact with your own mind, emotions, and body? If Jesus is the world's Creator and everything in it, how should you treat God's creation? How might this calm your life when creation is 'out of control?'

Tuesday, January 3rd. Read Mark 4:35-51, 5:1-20 & John 4:46-53. Jesus is God's authoritative voice. What does Jesus demonstrate control over in these verses? What is your response to Jesus after reading these verses? Do you see him in a new light and, if so, how? Does this view of Jesus give you confidence as you navigate the joys and sorrows of life. Today, look for an opportunity to express this confidence in Jesus to others (just like the people in these verses did).

Wednesday, January 10th. Read Genesis 3:8 & Luke 19:10. It was Jesus who walked in the Garden with Adam and Eve. It was Jesus who sought them after they sinned. How does this tie the whole Bible together for you? Does it help give definition to the overarching story? As a Christian, how are you working with Christ in seeking the lost? For what unbeliever will you pray this year? How will you get involved in the lives of unbelievers? Take time to consider and plan your evangelistic opportunities in 2023.

Thursday, January 11th. Read 1 Peter 1:10-12 & the poem, "God Knows." Where in the OT do you see Jesus? How does knowing God's redemptive plan began before the world was created give you confidence about God's plan for you this year? What makes you fear now? What worries you? Place those things in the context of God's whole story and place your faith in the God who powerfully works his will in the world.

Friday, January 12th. Read Ex 20:18-19, 1 Kings 19:11-13 & Mt 17:5. How did Moses and Elijah meet Jesus in the OT? Why might they have been present on the Mount of Transfiguration? This means that God's word in the OT is the same as Jesus's words in the NT. How does this change the way you receive Jesus's words? Think on that as you read through the Bible this year.

This poem, enjoyed by the late Queen Elizabeth, was given to her father, King George VI (*The King's Speech*), by the princess when she was just thirteen years old. The king chose to include it in his 1939 Christmas broadcast to the British Empire. Her mother, the Queen Mother, engraved its words on the gates of the King George VI Memorial Chapel at Windsor Castle, where she and her husband are buried. The poem was also included in her funeral service. Remember that, as the king gave this speech, Germany had just invaded Poland three months earlier, and World War 2 had begun. The future for Europe, and the world, was a great unknown.

'God Knows'

Aka, 'The Gate of the Year' and 'Safer Than a Known Way.'
by Minnie Louise Haskins (1875-1957)

*And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown".*

And he replied:

*"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.
That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way".
So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night.
And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone East.*

*So heart be still:
What need our little life*

*Our human life to know,
If God hath comprehension?
In all the dizzy strife
Of things both high and low,
God hideth His intention.*

*God knows. His will
Is best. The stretch of years
Which wind ahead, so dim
To our imperfect vision,
Are clear to God. Our fears
Are premature; In Him,
All time hath full provision.*

*Then rest: until
God moves to lift the veil
From our impatient eyes,
When, as the sweeter features
Of Life's stern face we hail,
Fair beyond all surmise
God's thought around His creatures
Our mind shall fill.*